

# Placer County Health and Human Services Department

## **CATERING GUIDELINES**

#### **PURPOSE:**

The California Retail Food Code (Cal Code) does not specifically address the permitting and regulation of caterers. The purpose of these guidelines is to assist our customers regarding catering operations requirements in Placer County.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

- Caterer -
- any person who operates from a permitted food facility and who supplies food and related services including, but not limited to, an off premises catered function. Per Cal Code, Caterers are required to have a valid Health Permit and shall operate from a permitted food facility (i.e. Commissary, Restaurant, or Coffee Shop, etc...).
- Cook-for-Hire any person hired to prepare and/or serve food at a private function. All food prepared by a Cook-for-Hire is handled at the location of the private function. No food is stored, prepared or handled at the private home of the Cook-for-Hire. Cook-for-Hires may not operate at public functions.
- Commissary a permitted food facility that services Mobile Food Facilities (MFF), Mobile Support Units (MSU), Vending Machines, and Caterers where any or all of the following occur: food and supplies are stored; food is prepared and/or prepackaged; utensils are cleaned and sanitized; liquid and solid waste are disposed; and where potable water is obtained.
- <u>Catering Vehicle</u> a vehicle upon which food, beverages, utensils and related serving equipment is transported to a catered function.
- Off Premises Catering Function any private or public function where a Caterer provides food and related services for a person or persons at a location other than their permitted food facility.

For additional information please contact Environmental Health.

## **OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- ❖ A Cook-for-Hire shall sign and submit a Cook-for-Hire Statement. No health permit is required. Business license application will not be signed off until Cook-for-Hire Statement is approved. Cook-for-Hire shall either use employer's food or shop directly before arriving at employer's home/private function.
- ❖ A Caterer shall have a valid health permit. (Cal Code Section 114381) Submit permit application with original commissary letter and copy of current of commissary's health permit if located outside of Placer County. Also provide a Written Operational Procedures form.
- At least one person shall possess a current food safety certificate and other staff shall have food handler cards. (Sections 113947, 113949, 113790)
- All food, prior to the function, shall be stored and prepared at the Caterer's permitted food facility or commissary. (Sections 113789, 114021)
- All utensils and equipment shall be washed and stored at the Caterer's permitted food facility or commissary. Prior to use, all utensils shall be washed and sanitized. Utensils and equipment (i.e. probe thermometer, etc.) shall be protected from contamination. (Sections 114095, 114099, 114089, and 114175)
- At all times that the Caterer has control over the food, including periods of storage, preparation, transportation and service, all food shall be adequately protected so as to be maintained pure and free from adulteration, spoilage and contamination (ex: ice used for refrigeration at a catering function shall not be used for consumption). (Sections 113980, 113982, 113984, 113990)
- ❖ All Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF's) shall be prepared, transported, and maintained at the appropriate temperatures (i.e. cold foods @  $\leq$ 41°F and hot foods @  $\geq$ 135°F.
- The Caterer shall not provide home prepared food at a catered function, except foods that are approved from a permitted or registered Cottage Food Operation (CFO).
- All food handlers shall wash their hands and arms with cleanser and warm water before commencing work, immediately after using toilet facilities, and as frequently as necessary to prevent contamination of food, etc... No bare hand contact is allowed with ready-to-eat foods.
- Toilet facilities shall be available within 200 feet of the catered function.
- Catering vehicles shall be maintained in a clean, sanitary condition. (Sections 114257)
- Catering activities allowed-Public vs. Private functions:

Public function	Private function
<ul> <li>a) Catering shall occur inside a permanent structure. No food service allowed outside in pop-up tents or on tables underneath a patio cover.</li> <li>b) No food prep may occur on site at the catered function.</li> <li>All food prep shall occur at the approved food facility commissary. No barbeques or wood burning ovens.</li> <li>c) Caterer may only scoop, serve and/or hand over the food to customer. The Caterer may not assemble the customer's food. Ex. Make a sandwich to order, assemble a taco</li> <li>d) Hot and cold holding of foods may occur.</li> <li>e) Caterers may accept money from individual customers.</li> <li>f) Caterer shall remain on site for the longevity of the food service.</li> <li>g) Caterer may only do food prep on site (with full enclosure) when participating in a community event with the proper permits.</li> </ul>	a) Catering can occur inside a permanent structure or outside in pop-up tents. b) Food prep may occur on site at the catered function. c) Barbeques, wood burning ovens, etc. are allowed. d) Hot and cold holding of foods may occur.